



LOUISIANA PTA

# THE MONITOR

BACK TO SCHOOL

ISSUE ONE 2011

## DATES TO REMEMBER:

### October

- 3 Custodian Workers Day & Child Health Day
- 8 National Children's Day
- 12 Columbus Day (Observed)
- 10 Official Columbus Day
- 13-19 American Education Week
- 17 National Bosses Day
- 24 United Nation's Day
- 24-28 GEE Retest Days
- 27 Make a Difference Day
- 31 Halloween

### November

- 4-6 LAPTA Board Meeting
- 6 Daylight Savings Time Ends
- 8 Election Day
- 11 Veteran's Day
- 16 Support Professional Day
- 21-25 Thanksgiving Holiday

### December

- 7 Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day
- 19-31 Christmas Holiday

### January

- 1 New Year's Day
- 15 Reflections Entries Due from Districts
- 16 Martin Luther King Jr. Holiday
- 23 Chinese New Year

### February

- 1-29 BLACK HISTORY MONTH
- 1 STATE DEADLINES for:  
Safety Drawing Entries,  
Safety Drawing Theme  
Search, Website Entries,  
Newsletter Entries,  
Educator of Distinction,  
Honor and Outstanding Unit  
Entries (Check Resource  
Guide for addresses to send  
entries)
- 3-5 LAPTA Board Meeting
- 6-10 School Counseling Week
- 8 Boy Scouts' 101 Birthday
- 12 Lincoln's Birthday
- 14 Valentine's Day
- 15 Susan B. Anthony Day
- 20 President's Day Holiday
- 21 Mardi Gras Day
- 22 Ash Wednesday,  
Washington's Birthday

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear PTA Presidents and Leaders,

For over 100 years, the PTA has been the organization that our nation's families rely on to represent public education and children. PTA is the bedrock of most school communities, providing a place for parents and teachers to belong to a greater organization designed to improve their schools and children's lives.

As PTA members, we belong to a group that promotes better choices for our children. A group that utilizes its' collective power to achieve the goals of improving the health and welfare of all children.

Over the past ten years, National PTA has wrestled with continuing

to leverage our collective power while still providing the services that are needed at the local level. The past ten years have been marked by increasing costs and further demand on all of National PTAs resources. National PTA has instituted various cost cutting measures over the years to attempt to keep pace with these rising costs. With consideration of the rising costs, the expense reductions already implemented and increased demand for services, the National PTA Executive Board decided it should recommend the first fee increase in ten years.

At the National PTA Convention recently, delegates took these many struggles into account and vigorously discussed the issues facing our organiza-

tion. It was after much debate that delegates voted to raise National PTA's portion of the member fees from \$1.75 to \$2.25. With this change, the member fee for the combined Louisiana PTA and National PTA will increase from \$2.75 to \$3.25 beginning July 1, 2011.

Although we all know that this is a difficult time to be implementing a fee increase, PTA remains an incredible value.

Thank you for your service to your PTA/PTSA, your community and, most importantly, our children. It takes leaders to make an organization great. Thank you for being a leader.

Sharon Pender  
Louisiana State  
PTA President

## SECRETARY/BY-LAWS NEWS

I hope that each unit in our state has gotten off to a great start! As State Secretary, it is my responsibility to record all the business of the state PTA for the official record. All secretaries have an important responsibility to our organization because "if it's not in the minutes, it didn't happen." Please refer to the Secretary Section of your Resource Guide or contact me personally if you need clarification on the correct format for minutes or your job description.

For the past several years the State Secretary has been the chair of the State

Bylaws Committee but this past July the board of directors voted to separate the two duties. As secretary, I will still maintain a copy of your bylaws buy all bylaws will now be sent to Kimberly Smith, State Bylaws Chair, for approval. Also, you will now find a Bylaws Approval Form in your Resource Guide that should be completed, signed and mailed with your bylaws changes. The new form will give the Bylaws Chair contact information and the date that your bylaws were approved by your

See Secretary/Bylaws cont'd. pg. 10

## FAMILY-SCHOOL PARTNERSHIPS: NATIONAL STANDARDS FOR FAMILY-SCHOOL PARTNERSHIPS

**Standard 1:** Welcoming all families into the school community—Families are active participants in the life of the school, and feel welcomed, valued, and connected to each other, to school staff, and to what students are learning and doing in class.

**Standard 2:** Communicating effectively—Families and school staff engage in regular, two-way, meaningful communication about student learning.

**Standard 3:** Supporting student success—Families and school staff continuously collaborate to support students' learning and healthy development both at home and at school, and have regular opportunities to strengthen their knowledge and skills to do so effectively.

**Standard 4:** Speaking up for every child—Families are empowered to be advocates for their own and other children, to ensure that students are treated fairly and have access to learning opportunities that will support their success.

**Standard 5:** Sharing power—Families and school staff are equal partners in decisions that affect children and families and together inform, influence, and create policies, practices, and programs.

**Standard 6:** Collaborating with community—Families and school staff collaborate with community members to connect students, families, and staff to expanded learning opportunities, community services, and civic participation.

## PTA TAKE YOUR FAMILY TO SCHOOL WEEK AWARDS

PTA® Take Your Family to School Week® is celebrated each February to pay tribute to PTA's legacy of building family-school partnerships. PTA Take Your Family to School Week will be held **February 12–18, 2012** with the purpose of expanding and enhancing family engagement in schools across the country.

National PTA® offers grants to PTAs to implement programs that engage families in the school community. These grants can be used to build positive partnerships with teachers and families, connect parents to their children's school experiences, and give children fun ways to share what they are learning and doing in class with their families.

PTA Take Your Family to School Week is sponsored by the AXA Foundation, the philanthropic arm of AXA Equitable. The AXA Foundation is a Proud National Sponsor of PTA. The AXA Foundation provides more than \$1.3 million a year in scholarships to make college a reality for students across the country.

## MILLION HOURS OF POWER

**Tracking Tool:** Log in to this survey to record volunteer hours toward the **Million Hours of Power at website:**

[\\_http://support.fathers.com/site/Survey?ACTION\\_REQUIRED=URI\\_ACTION\\_USER\\_REQUESTS&SURVEY\\_ID=6140](http://support.fathers.com/site/Survey?ACTION_REQUIRED=URI_ACTION_USER_REQUESTS&SURVEY_ID=6140)

Log in your hours in the survey. To combat historically low male participation in parent involvement groups, National PTA's More Men Organized to Raise Engagement) Alliance and the National Fatherhood Leaders Group have teamed up to launch **A Million Hours of Power**, an initiative to inspire 350,000 American men to dedicate three hours of service to the education, health and well-being of children. Three hours of service—truly a small amount of time to invest—from 350,000 men totals more than 1 million hours of true power to the lives of children, resulting in educational, social and physical benefits to kids across the nation.

**Million Hours of Power**  
“Give a little, change a

lot” will be the rallying call to action for the Million Hours of Power grassroots campaign. Research proves that parent involvement leads to student success in school and life. Children perform better in school when both the mother and the father or a male role model are both involved in the education of their children. The Million Hours of Power campaign will encourage men to dedicate three hours of their time to the health, education and well-being of children in their families and communities during the 2010-2011 school year. Working with the National Center for Fathering, PTA has provided a tracking tool so you can log your hours and watch the campaign's progress toward 1 million hours (see link below). The hope is that once men see how much reward they get for so little effort, then they will develop greater habits of engagement and responsibility to children and families. Use the resources below to contribute your three hours of power.



**To Apply for PTA Take Your Family to School Week Awards, go to website:** [http://www.pta.org/take\\_your\\_family\\_to\\_school\\_awards.asp](http://www.pta.org/take_your_family_to_school_awards.asp)

Your application should be submitted in two steps:

**Step 1:** Please complete the grant application and save it as a Word or PDF document. Please use your PTA's name as your document's file name (e.g. your final document is called “SpringfieldPTA.doc”). You will submit your grant application online in Step 2.

**Step 2:** Submit your demographic information online and upload your grant application.

**Continued on page 7**

## JUST BETWEEN FRIENDS – COMMUNICATE. MANAGE MEMBERSHIP. EARN REVENUE.

Just Between Friends is available to all units in our state **free of charge!** Take advantage of the opportunity to use this online system to grow and strengthen your PTA. With Just Between Friends, you can communicate with your entire school community; manage membership; create paper or online directories; earn non-dues revenue; and manage volunteers – all on a private, secure system. You can read Just Between Friends strict privacy policy by visiting [www.JustBetweenFriends.com](http://www.JustBetweenFriends.com).

It's easy to enter members into Just Between Friends. There are three methods: member self-entry, individual manual entry, and spreadsheet upload. Once your members are entered, it's time to begin communicating with them. Just Between Friends has an email template library for you to choose from. When sending emails, you can attach files of the most popular formats. And when you send notices or deadlines, the system will send automatic reminders – **all at no cost to your unit!**

Parents will want to join your communications group in Just Between Friends to keep informed about what's happening at your school. If parents have children in one or more schools that use Just Between Friends, they only need one household account to receive communications and see events and reminders posted to their start page and calendar from all of the other communication groups they've joined. This makes it so

easy for parents to manage their family's schedule. If you'd like a single sheet flyer to distribute to parents that presents the benefits to them of joining your communications group in Just Between Friends, please contact Fran Lytle [fran@mailjbf.com](mailto:fran@mailjbf.com).

Your unit will enjoy another great benefit when you use Just Between Friends for communications – **revenue share**. Please contact your PTA/Just Between Friends liaison to get all the details about revenue share (412-561-0500 x 1203).

If you're not using Just Between Friends, it's easy to get started. Visit [www.JustBetweenFriends.com/PTAquickstart](http://www.JustBetweenFriends.com/PTAquickstart) and enter your unit. If you have questions, click on **Contact Us** and a Just Between Friends Customer Support Representative will promptly help you.

Then, learn how to use the system by visiting [www.LearnJBF.com](http://www.LearnJBF.com). Here you'll find lots of "How-to" information. Plus, you'll see a training webinar schedule. Sign up for as many webinars as you'd like – it's a fun and easy way to learn how to use the system.

**Fran Lytle**  
**Just Between Friends**  
Director of Marketing – 412-561-0500 ext. 1005



## HOWIE MANDEL ENDORSES NATIONAL PTA

We are pleased to announce that Howie Mandel, stand-up comedian, actor, and most-recently, host of NBC's highly-rated TV game show *Deal or No Deal*, has endorsed National PTA membership in a 30-second public service announcement (PSA).

This PSA is donated to National PTA in conjunction with The Child Safety Network (CSN). Founded in 1989, CSN works to reduce child abuse, abduction, exploitation, and injury by developing and implementing safety programs. They have worked closely for over 15 years with former California State PTA President Jan Domene and are a long-standing sponsor of the California State PTA.

The PSA showcases Mandel informing viewers of National PTA's efforts to get parents involved in their children's education for over 100 years. Mandel asks

viewers to join PTA by visiting the PTA.org website. The PSA is available on the PTA.org website and the National PTA YouTube channel.

You are encouraged to use the PSA for State PTA membership drives, State PTA meetings and events, or add the link in your State PTA e-newsletters. All PTA Membership Leaders are further encouraged to communicate the availability of this marketing tool to your state's local units for the same purpose. The PSA will be permanently housed on the PTA.org website under the website headers: *Running a PTA* à *PTA Marketing Tools* à *Howie Mandel Supports National PTA*.

If you have questions or comments about the PSA, please contact Joy Lindsey, Membership Marketing Manager at [jlindsey@pta.org](mailto:jlindsey@pta.org) or 1-800-307-4PTA (4782).



## 2011-2012 GRANT APPLICATION UPDATE

For more than 60 years, Lowe's has supported the communities we call home. At a time when schools and community groups are struggling to make ends meet, Lowe's Charitable and Educational Foundation recognizes that we must increase our focus on basic, one-time project needs.

Again, this year, we challenge ourselves to seek ways to provide the tools that help our educators and parent groups through these challenging times efficiently and with the greatest impact. In 2011-2012, basic needs will take priority. Please keep this focus in mind as you apply for a Toolbox for Education grant in the 2011-2012 academic year. Thank you.

Now in its 6th year of helping build better schools and communities, the Lowe's Toolbox for Education program has provided nearly \$25 million to more than 5,000 schools across the country.

### **3 Simple Steps to Application Success:**

**Step 1:** Print out and review the Pre-Application Checklist (PDF file). Note: You will need Adobe Acrobat installed on your computer to read this file. Get the current version of Adobe Acrobat.

Use the Pre-Application as a guide to collect and compile a Word document that contains your group's application information. The pre-application checklist includes all of the details you will need to supply as part of your application. When you are ready to submit the application online, you can copy and paste the data from the Word document into the online application.

**Step 2:** Develop a project that you would like to complete using funds from a Toolbox for Education grant. Visit the Sample Projects page for ideas and inspiration.

**Step 3:** Submit your application. **Go to [www.toolboxforeducation.com/hta.html](http://www.toolboxforeducation.com/hta.html) and click on How to Apply\* or Call our customer service team at 1-800-644-3561 X 208 or email us.**

\*The online application form has a 25-minute time limit, so we recommend that you follow the method described under Step 1 for compiling and submitting the application information. Also, we cannot provide you with a copy of your application once it has been submitted online. Compiling your application data in a Word document will allow you to retain a copy of the application data on your computer.

## SPECIAL AWARDS: FOCUS ON EDUCATOR OF DISTINCTION AWARDS

Being nominated for the Educator of Distinction award should be an honor, not a bunch of extra work, right? Local units can do a lot to help their nominee put together an application packet and help their chances for winning that shiny plaque!

The first step is to choose a nominee. Each local unit may nominate one person for the award. Those eligible must have a current teaching certificate, but can include administrators, coordinators, and librarians. Go over the qualifications listed in the Resource Guide.

Second, make a checklist of each item to include in the application. Be sure to include every item listed in the Resource Guide. This is where the local unit can really take a lot of the burden off the nominee. You can gather letters of recommendation, take a nice photograph, make a picture collage page, and be sure that there are four copies of everything.

Third, help your nominee to write a targeted narrative. The applications are judged on a 100 point scale in the following categories: general information (15 points),

contributions to education (30 points), professional development (20 points), education and civic service including PTA involvement (20 points), and the letters of recommendation (15 points). The narrative should be concise and written in the first person by your nominee. These categories are really important for judging. A minimum score of 85 is required to be eligible for this state level award, and only the top ten scores will be recognized as winners. The top ten scores for 2011 ranged from 91.0 to 99.5 points.

Before submitting the application packet, go over your checklist to be sure that each item required is included in the packet. Pay attention to typing and paper requirements (white pages only). Use report folders to secure all pages neatly. Each submission should include one original packet and 3 copies, all bound in report folders. Finally, remember that the deadline for submission is February 1<sup>st</sup>, 2012 and applications are mailed directly to the Special Awards Chair.

Jessica Wallace Ayala  
Special Awards Chair

## REFLECTIONS PROGRAM—3RD VICE PRESIDENT

Hello everyone! I hope each of you had a relaxing, enjoyable Summer. Many local units already have their Reflections Program chairperson. For unit presidents, it is important that when you have a Reflections Program chairperson assigned, please give them a copy of the National Reflections Program information provided in your unit's resource guide. Some of the rules, and some of the forms are now updated.

- Set your local entry deadline to allow time for judging, prior to sending the entries to your District PTA.
- Become familiar with all rules, as some rules have changed.
- Obtain your judges now
- All forms must be completed in their entirety, including parent permission, new consent form, student signatures, artist statement, and a form requiring all people primarily pictured in a photo, choreography dance or film video list and obtain consents of all minors in the entry. It is the primary responsibility of the local PTA unit to check entries and make sure all the rules are followed. Unfortunately, every year, excellent Reflections Programs entries are disqualified if forms are not completed, or the rules are not followed.
- Students are permitted to submit a Reflections entry

in each of the six areas.

- Encourage students to enter the National PTA Theme contest.

Important dates to remember:

- NOVEMBER 1st—The Theme Search Contest entry must be received by the LAPTA 3rd Vice President
- JANUARY 15th—All Reflections Program entries are due from our DISTRICT PTA's. Make sure you get the entries to your District PTA by your District required date: Contact your District PTA to make sure of their required date.

Remember the 3 P's

- **Promote**—the Reflections Program and Theme Contest in your school
- **Provide**—all forms and information to students as needed.
- **Participate**—encourage student participation.

If you have any questions, you may contact me at (985) 865-9099 or e-mail [peggyseely@bellsouth.net](mailto:peggyseely@bellsouth.net).

Mail Theme Contest entries and Reflections Entries to: Peggy Seeley, LAPTA 3rd VP, 39208 Oak Street, Pearl River, LA 70452. Have fun and have a blessed school year!

Peggy Seeley, LAPTA 3rd VP

## REFLECTIONS SPECIAL NOTICE



As you are all aware, National PTA Reflections is working diligently to improve efficiencies within the Reflections Program and to streamline processes involved with the administration and adjudication of the hundreds of thou-

sands of entries received each year. Our primary purpose in doing so is to free all of our Reflections leaders across the country and abroad from time consuming, expensive, and often inefficient administrative work so that, together, we can serve more children. As part of this process, and at the recommendation of PTA Reflections leadership, we want to leverage existing and free technological advancements that will allow leaders to reallocate their time and resources to children and to program activities that are at the core of successfully growing Reflections participation.

One step that will save us many hours, expenses and resources is requesting that digital submissions be submitted in the same format. This year, we ask that dance choreography and film production entries be saved to CD or DVD in **.flv format**, which is the only format that will upload to the PTA Reflections online gallery. Free

software exists that easily converts a file of almost any kind to the **.flv format**. To familiarize our leadership with the process of saving files in the **.flv format**, National PTA will develop a webinar training module to be available in August. The module will provide a link to the software that is available at no charge for both PC and MAC computers. It will also include a step by step demonstration on how to save a video file in **.flv format**. We will provide a link to the module as soon as it is completed, and we encourage you to use it and to share it with all area and local PTA units, as well as families who may be interested in this resource. Even though our preference is to receive all dance composition and film production entries in the **.flv format**, the National PTA Board wants us to assure you that we will accept these submissions in other file formats this year if a file cannot be converted. National PTA will support all children who want to participate in the Reflections Program and will stand ready to assist those who need special consideration.

Thank you so much for all you are doing to make this Reflections year our best ever. The arts and our children are worth it!

Sincerely,

Jane Coyne [<mailto:jcoyne@pta.org>]

## DISTRICT NEWS

### St. Tammany District

Wow! St. Tammany Parish has added three new schools this year: Lancaster Elem., Mayfield Elem., and Abney Early Childhood Center and all three schools have successfully started their own Local Unit PTA's. Their local unit leaders have been hard at work planning and implementing all of their ideas. Lancaster Elem. has already sold over 400 memberships. Mayfield Elem. has had a chaotic year since they are not yet in their new facility and are sharing the campus of two existing schools. It has been a challenge for them, but they have perseverance and have shown that hard work and determination brings success. They expect to be moving to their brand new campus during the Thanksgiving break. Abney Early Childhood Center got a late start on their PTA but are already planning their membership drive. That makes 55 local units for St. Tammany District PTA and needless to say, it has been a crazy September.

The first Saturday after school started out district hosted our annual Summer Leadership Academy. It was a great success and was attended by over 160 local unit leaders, school administrators and teachers, district school board employees, our superintendent and even some VIP's from other school districts. We had great workshops and brought in community volunteers as well as district board members as trainers. The reviews were overwhelmingly positive.

St. Tammany District PTA will host our next General Membership meeting on October 10th at Abita Springs Middle School and will be treated to a special performance by their Fiddle Class. We will also have a guest speaker that will talk to our members about how to prevent and treat the seasonal flu. Moreover, we have a donation of a one night stay at a Biloxi Hotel as one of our door prizes.

We have started a program for struggling units. All district board members were asked if they would additionally serve as a volunteer District Resource Liaison. Those who rose to the challenge are being assigned to local units that have asked for a District Resource Liaison. Right now we have 4 local units that have asked for some additional guidance. The purpose is to match the local unit with a knowledgeable and experienced PTA leader to guide them through any problems they may be facing. It is never the intent of the District Resource Liaison to run their meetings or tell them what to do. It is their job to train them to look for the answers from our many resources that we have at our disposal and to advise them when they need extra help.

Our Children's Banquet Committee has already started planning the awards banquet to be held in March and will be using St. Tammany District PTA's theme, Today's Student, Tomorrow's Future. We normally have right around 500 in attendance and it is a night that many of us look forward to each year. It is one of the most rewarding times for us when we see all the Reflection's and Safety Poster Program participants accepting their district recognition. The little one's especially tug at our heartstrings. It is also a time for us to re-focus on the reason we all volunteer our time. To serve all children. Every Child, One Voice...A simple yet profound aphorism.

Terri Turow

St. Tammany District PTA President

### News from Caddo district PTA

We are now preparing for our Principals Luncheon to be hosted by Caddo District PTA at the East Ridge Country Club on October 27<sup>th</sup>. Every year we host a luncheon to honor all of our school principals and have a wonderful time. Each principal is presented a gift just for them by their PTA as a small token of appreciation for all they do at their schools. How great it is to host this event every year!

Caddo District is trying a new meetings schedule for all PTA hosted meetings. The Board of Directors meets at 8:30AM – 9:30AM with our General Membership meeting starting at 9:30 to be finalized by 10:30 AM. All meetings start on time so that principals, PTA presidents and board members are able to get back the work of running their schools and PTA's. I tell everyone we will meet for one hour. We have also started hosting our meeting on the 2nd Tuesday of the month which is a change from the first Tuesday of the month.

We had over 100 PTA officers, board members, school board members and principals attend and participate in the workshops at our August In-service. Workshops presented were, Membership, Presidents, and Treasurers. I hope they all went away ready to start a new school year and I wish them a successful year for the students that attend their schools.

Caddo District PTA had several special notices about Reflections we needed to make all PTA Presidents aware of. They were asked to be sure to read the instructions and follow the guidelines for packaging the entries and how to place special information at the bottom of each page. They must be judged at the district level and sent to the Louisiana PTA by January 15, 2012 for state judging. Bossier, Northeast and West Central need to send their entries directly to the state Reflection chair by the due date. There are several changes to the guidelines (Guardian and Parent consent form) so please read carefully the section that your students plan on participating in and be sure they meet those new guidelines.

You are encouraged to use the Caddo District PTA website and look at all the information that is there to help you in your schools. The website for the Caddo District PTA is: [www.caddodistrictpta.org](http://www.caddodistrictpta.org), Louisiana PTA is: [www.louisianapta.org](http://www.louisianapta.org) and the National PTA website is: [www.pta.org](http://www.pta.org).

Be sure to submit the Local Unit Budget Forms and this is a requirement of a "Unit in Good Standing" which is required for participations in all Louisiana and Caddo District PTA programs.

All PTA Presidents were asked to take a special look at the information in our first newsletter regarding the IRS revocations, filing the 990 e-Postcards for this past year with the IRS, and a request from National PTA about Choreography and Dance and Music on new formatting requirements.

*Margie Rayburn*, President

## DISTRICT NEWS CONTINUED

### Tangipahoa District

We are off and running at full pace. On August 6 we held our annual training at Independence Elementary School. The training went great and many units were present. One unit in attendance was our first new unit of this school year, Midway Elementary PTA. We would like to welcome them to our family.

Over the past two months the Robyn Hutchinson, Chris Cohea, and Lisa Landry have been very busy talking with principals in Tangipahoa Parish Schools about starting PTA/PTSAs in their schools. We would like to welcome Midway Elementary PTA and Martha Vineyard PTA to Tangipahoa District PTA. By the end of October we will be adding Roseland Montessori Magnet School and Hammond Jr. High Magnet School as a PTA. Welcome aboard to all of our new units.

Mr. Lionel Jackson will be hosting the first All-Pro Dads Breakfast in five of our schools during the month of September. We are looking forward to seeing all the fathers in our schools turn out to have breakfast with their children and find out more about PTA.

Tangipahoa is "Shaping the Future for All Children."

Submitted by:  
Robyn Hutchinson  
Tangipahoa District PTA President

## EF FOUNDATION FOR FOREIGN STUDY

EF Foundation for Foreign Study is a non-profit high school exchange organization that brings international students from around the world to the United States for a semester or a full year of high school. They are looking for volunteer host families in our area who would be interested in hosting an exchange student. They would like to partner with PTAs to create communities of American host families for foreign exchange students.

EF Foundation will make charitable donations of \$1000 to your organization for each one of your members that volunteers to host an exchange student. If you are interested in this worthwhile program, or have any further questions on the specifics of this program, please feel free to contact Leland.Scanlan@EF.com or 1-800-447-4273.

Leland Scanlan  
Host Family Recruitment Manager



Cont'd from pg. 2

**For more information on PTA Take Your Family to School Week:** Questions about the grant, the application, or funding decisions should be directed to National PTA at [ehart@pta.org](mailto:ehart@pta.org) or (800) 307-4PTA Ext. 3333.

**"Success is getting up just one more time than you fall down!"**

## BEYOND THE BACKPACK

[Beyond the Backpack](#) is a new pro-social initiative from Nickelodeon's [Dora the Explorer](#) that champions overall school readiness for preschoolers on their biggest adventure yet--going to school. Just as Backpack helps Dora prepare for new adventures, Beyond the Backpack provides parents with tools and resources to help kids prepare for a well-rounded, positive experience as they enter kindergarten.

The campaign is designed to call attention to the emotional, physical, experiential, and actual competencies that preschoolers need for those first, crucial steps into school, including: social skills and emotional intelligence; early literacy and math skills; in-school involvement and resources like school supplies; and health and wellness basics.

Through the initiative, National PTA and Nickelodeon have created a [kindergarten readiness quiz](#), a toolkit for parents and families that will give them the tools they

need to help their child be ready for kindergarten (see below), a public service announcement, and joint outreach efforts that will impact thousands of families nationwide. For more information, visit

[BeyondtheBackpack.com](http://BeyondtheBackpack.com).

**[Take the Kindergarten Readiness Quiz](#)**

Download the [Beyond the Backpack Toolkit](#)

Download the [Beyond the Backpack Overview](#)

National PTA and Nickelodeon are partnering with iTunes for Dora's Beyond the Backpack! **During the back-to-school season, all proceeds from episodes purchased from the Dora The Explorer Beyond The Backpack collection will be donated to National PTA to support the educational success of children.** Get involved with the five festive episodes in which you can lend a hand for the big Backpack Parade, help your team win the Super Adventure Race, and celebrate friends helping friends!

# LOUISIANA PTA

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## PLANS FOR 2012 CONVENTION



We have already started working hard on the 2012 convention in Lafayette. One of our major goals this year is to increase our male participation. Start talking to the men in your PTA and school now about joining us. We will have workshops each session geared specifically toward men as well as several new workshops for everyone. We are working towards opening registration the first part of January. Everything will be available on the State PTA website. I am working on keeping the Convention page of the

website updated. Check it often to learn what we are working on. I will post confirmed workshops, speakers, prices, and vendors. We are working hard to make this convention a great one, but we need your help. Tell us what you would like to see and do. Convention is for YOU, so give us some feedback on how we can make it better. Feel free to email me anytime with question or suggestions.

You can already book your room at the Hilton Hotel in Lafayette. Just call 1-337-235-6111 and mention group code LTA for our group rate.

Kerrie Landreth  
Leadership Development/Convention Chair  
[kerrielandreth@gmail.com](mailto:kerrielandreth@gmail.com)

## SECRETARY/BYLAWS CONTINUED

General membership. Please feel free to contact either of us if you have questions or need assistance updating your bylaws. Copies of your bylaws should be retained by the local unit, your district president, the state office and the state secretary. Remember your bylaws must be updated every five years for your local unit to be in good standing.

LAPTA Secretary  
Amy Failla  
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